

Component 1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

My three-day mini lesson is based on Uta Hagen's work as a theatre theorist, with a focus on realism and the importance of creating truthful, personal behavior on the stage. On the first day, students are introduced to her background and key ideas through a combination of PowerPoint presentation, reading and discussion. This provides a foundation before they begin applying those ideas actively on day two and three, still supported by video examples and continued discussion.

This unit is intentionally structured to move from theory into application. I wanted students to first learn who Uta Hagen is, what her theories are, and why they matter, before asking them to engage with her exercises. Acting cannot be fully grasped by reading alone, so it was important that the students were able to transition into physical, experiential learning. On day two, students are applying given circumstances to short scene and by day three they are working more independently with more personal and abstract ideas like sensory recall and immediacy.

While some familiarity with realism is helpful, I designed this lesson with novice actors in mind. I also know Ms. Adelman will provide a brief introduction/refresher on realism prior to my lesson, which allows students to enter with some shared context. Based on my observations, I know that many students have limited acting experience and limited exposure to live theatre. As a result, I focused on breaking down complex ideas into smaller, more manageable pieces and relying more on discussions and activities rather than lecture alone.

This lesson is built off a shorter Uta Hagen I had previously taught in my Theatre Education class. In this lesson, I introduced her theory of endowment through an activity, gave a brief background of Hagen as a theorist, and guided students through one of her exercises. I used that lesson experience as a starting point, expanding and adapting it to fit a three-day unit in a high school classroom.

Component 1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students

The planning of this unit was shaped by my ongoing observations of this class, which includes sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Most are Acting 2 students, and a smaller group of seniors are part of Advanced Acting and Directing. There is a wide range of ability levels as well as several students with accommodations.

Student engagement was a key consideration. I noticed that students lost focus quickly, especially during passive activities like watching videos or extended reading. At the same time, they are highly sociable and talk frequently. Rather than trying to eliminate this energy, I plan to redirect it into structured, fast-paced, activities where talking and interaction are part of the learning process.

Because of their age and developmental stage, students benefit from opportunities to move and express themselves. This influenced my decision to center the lessons around interactive exercises that make abstract concepts more relatable. These activities also allow students to learn from one another, which is more effective than teacher explanation alone.

I also had to consider students' reading ability. Several students struggled when reading aloud. Because of this, I avoided relying heavily on independent reading. Instead, I use guided notes,

short excerpts and discussion to support comprehension. The goal of this lesson is not mastery of the text but understanding and applying the ideas.

I recognize that many of these students are drawn to theatre because they enjoy creative expression. They like to make each other laugh and share their opinions. I try to build on this in my lesson by incorporating opportunities for personal connection. Hagen's work naturally supports this approach, as it encourages actors to draw from their own experiences, making the material more relevant and engaging.

I worked with Ms. Adelman to ensure my lesson aligned with student needs. For example, I was advised not to call on students randomly or require them to perform. Instead, I structured activities so that students could volunteer and engage at their comfort level. I included supports such as guided notes and step by step visual instructions to make lesson more accessible and easier to follow.

Component 1c: Selecting Instructional Outcomes

The objectives for this unit are aligned with both Illinois state standards and National theatre standards and are written in a clear and measurable way. Across the three days, students discuss concepts from Hagen's theory, apply those concepts in games/exercises, and reflect on their learning in writing. This progression supports multiple types of learning and provides different ways for students to demonstrate learning.

The objectives are also designed to support a range of learners. Some students feel more comfortable speaking while others may prefer to write or engage physically. By incorporating a variety of assessments, I aimed to create multiple entry points for success.

Component 1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

The primary resource for this lesson is *A Challenge for the Actor* by Uta Hagen. I use PowerPoint lecture, video clips and reading selections to present that material in different ways. I also adapted activities from another high school teacher's lesson on Hagen, modifying them to better fit my students and the time frame of the mini unit.

Component 1e: Designing Coherent Instruction

These lessons are designed to build logically from one day to the next, with each subsequent lesson reinforcing and extending previous learning. By the final day, students are able to see how the different exercises they did connect with Hagen's approach to acting. I also use a mix of grouping strategies throughout the unit, including partner work, whole class discussion and individual reflection.

My mini unit is part of a larger unit of theatre theorists and it serves as the introduction before students move on to study other important figures. Later, Advanced Acting students will complete research projects on a theorist of their choice. My goal in this lesson is to provide a strong example that students can build on as they create their own theorist presentations and continue exploring different approaches to acting.

Component 1f: Designing Student Assessments

Assessment in this unit is ongoing and aligned with learning objectives. I use formative assessments such as exit slips, participation in activities, and completion of activity worksheets to monitor student understanding. Assessment results inform my instruction. For example, the

exit slip after day one, helps me identify areas of confusion allowing me to revisit or clarify concept on day two before moving forward. This ensures that instruction remains responsive and students are building on a strong foundation.

Feedback is provided after all activities through verbal responses and class discussion. After the activity on day two, students receive feedback from both the teacher and their peers, allowing them an opportunity to adjust and improve their work.

The summative assessment is the day three exit slip, where students reflect on the past three days of lessons and explain how they they all connect to Hagen's theory. This requires students to move beyond recall and demonstrate a deeper understanding of the concepts.